AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE
Post Office Box 50374
Atlanta, Georgia 30302

The AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

requests your presence at our

SECOND ANNUAL MARQUIS WALKER HUMANITARIAN AWARD DINNER

on the evening of

October 21, 1989

LANIER PLAZA HOTEL
418 Armour Drive, North East
Atlanta, Georgia
(Interstate 85 at Monroe)

The reception will begin at 6:30 pm.

Dinner will be served at 7:30 pm.

Price: $15.00 for AALGA Members
$25.00 for Non-members
$40.00 for Couples

Tickets available at Charis and from AALGA members.

Call 752-7253 for more information.

AS PROUD OF OUR GAYNESS AS WE ARE OF OUR BLACKNESS

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 1989

4:00PM

ST. ANTHONYS'

928 GORDAN ST

FOR INFORMATION

297-8815 / 681-3278

African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance

The basic purposes of AALGA include: to work against racism, sexism, and homophobia in all communities; to create positive attitude between and among black non-gays and gays; to improve the relationships between black lesbians and gay men; to maintain and stress the beauty of black culture and lesbian/gay culture; and to build a strong political and economic base for black lesbians and gay men.

Crossroads is produced by the African American Lesbian Gay Alliance for the people and the organizations that make up and support the black lesbian/gay community. This monthly newsletter reports the events and activities of our community concerns. Unsolicited contributions are welcomed and encouraged.

TO BECOME INVOLVED RETURN THE REPLY CARD BELOW TO

AALGA
POST OFFICE BOX 50374
ATLANTA, GA 30302
(404) 297-8815 (404) 681-3278

THE AALGA MEMBERSHIP LIST IS CONFIDENTIAL AND IS NOT SOLD OR SHARED WITH ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION.

AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE
REGULAR MEETING
December 3, 1989

AGENDA

Call to order

Opening reflections

Minutes of November 5th meeting

Old Business:

- Kwanza celebration committee (20 min.)
- National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Conference report (10 min.)

New Business:

- Nomination and Election Committee (15 min)
    - Selection of Committee Chair/Members
    - Committee Duties and Responsibilities
    - Term of Office for Board Members
    - Nominations for AALGA Broad of Directors
- Martin L. King, Jr. Holiday Celebration
- Presentations and Discussions
    - Ms. Carolyn Mobley
      Topic: Current Books Available at Charis Bookstore
      (10 min.)
    - Mr. Linwood Moody and Mr. David Harmon
      Presentation: Wearable Art
      (30 min.)

Announcements

Adjournment

CROSSROADS

THE NEWS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/ GAY ALLIANCE

VOLUME 2, NO. 5 AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1988

Definition: Crossroads
(1) a small community located at the intersection of two or more roads (2) a central meeting place (3) a crucial point especially where a decision must be made.

There should be an additional definition for **Crossroads**: (4) a place where travelers take the time to stop, meet one another and share tales of their journeys and life experiences. If this newsletter seems a bit thin to you, you're right, and there's something you can do change that. Some of the stated purposes of AALGA are "to improve the relationship between black lesbian and gay men; (and) to maintain and stress the beauty of black lesbian/gay culture". To that end, we offer you the pages of *CROSSROADS*. This is our newsletter and through it we can share with each other and proclaim to the world that which makes us beautiful and unique. You are invited to share yourself and your world with us. If you have a tale to tell, experience to share, a newspaper or magazine clipping of interest or knowledge we all could use, take the time to send it to *CROSSROADS* . Send submissions to **AALGA, PO Box 50374, Atlanta,Ga., 30302,** let's make sure this newsletter stays more than just a listing of upcoming events. (Next deadline September 20)

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Daily, through **August 17**.....Field to Factory, Afro-American Migration 1915 - 1940, APEX Museum, 135 Auburn Ave. This is a travelling exhibition on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Daily through **September 4**.Harlem Renaissance, Art of Black America, High Museum of Art, 1280 Peachtree St. This exhibit was organized by the Studio Museum in Harlem. Call the High for times.

Saturday, August 20.....**LIFEBOAT**, a minority support organization, invites you to a **FISH FRY**. Their 2nd Annual **AIDS Benefit Affair.** 2876 Alameda Trail, 3:00 pm until 10:00 pm. Dinners, sandwiches and soda will be available. Donations to benefit minority AIDS patients at Grady Hospital. R.S.V.P. 241-5691 or 243-5746. Comfortable Attire.

Saturday, August 20....."Shattering the Silence," Workshop for Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, facilitated by Sabrina Sojourner. 9:30 am - 4:00 pm. Call Sabrina at 378-6979 for more information. Participation fee is $20.

Sunday, August 21....."Super Summer Splash." **AALGA Pool Party**. 5:00 pm until 11:00 pm. 7100 Roswell Rd. (The Valley Apt. Clubhouse). Come and join us for some fun in the sun. Tropical delicacies and a cash bar, casual attire and swimwear, admission: $3:00. Call 874-6014 for directions.

Wednesday, August 31.....Deadline for Nomination for the **Marquis Walker Memorial Humanitarian Award**. Send letters of nominations to AALGA, PO Box 50374, Atlanta,Ga., 30302.

Sunday, September 4.....You are invited to "Come Lay '88" at the 14th annual Labor Day Party. 2237 Shamrock Dr. 4pm-10pm. Bring your own pinic blanket and basket. Call 289-0298 for info.

Sunday, September 11.....**AALGA General Meeting**, 4 pm. Open to Everyone . Call 378-6979 for info.

Saturday, September 17.....**Michael Lomax**, Fulton County Commission Chairman will be present at a Wine and Cheese reception sponsored by **AALGA** at the First Existentialist Church, 470 Candler Park Dr, at ~~4pm~~ 2pm. Everyone is invited. Call 378-6979 for more information.

Saturday, September 24..... Deadline for submissions of poetry, short fiction, non-fiction or essays for AALGA's first literary publication. All submissions will be considered. Dare to say what you have always wanted to say! Submissions should be sent to 1175-B Church St., Decatur, GA 30030. Call Chuck at 378-9493 for more information.

Coming October 30: AALGA Humanitarian Award Dinner/Fundraiser. Details to follow.

CROSSROADS

THE NEWS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

VOLUME 3 No. 7 July - December 1989

Dear Readers:

It has been a task to get this job done. Since Robin left and had to take his computer for his studies, we have had the duty of locating a viable system with which to work and now, prayerfully, we have. Out thanks are extended to our eminent supporter for this endeavor. Our many thanks to Robin and Angie for a job well done.

We apologize for any events you might have missed but as we know Murphy's Law is always present we just have to dispel it at all costs. There has been a lot going on and we know you had other means of finding these things, but we would just like to be sure you get the information from us as well. Cross your fingers and pray for better days because we'll need that and some other help as well.

Out newsletter distribution is getting quite costly with the cost of production constantly rising. We need to devise a plan to help us in this endeavor, but we'll need YOUR help. If you have not paid your membership dues or subscribed to CROSSROADS, the possibility exists that this might be your LAST newsletter. We encourage you to pay your membership dues (only $25 annually) or subscribe (only $13 annually). It's only a small price to pay for all the information you'll receive.

We solicit your input because this is YOUR newsletter and you should have in it what you want to share with others. We want you to share editorials, shortstories, poems, prose, invitations, and questions. We'll probably answer your "I Need Help" situations as well. Just send all your information to us at P.O. Box 50374, Atlanta, GA 30302 by the 10th of each month and we look forward to a release date from a week to ten days before the firs Sunday.

We are pleased to have this opportunity to share with you in this newsletter.

In our Circle of Love,

Missy Cole, Co-Editor

pat lewis, Co-Editor

AALGA MEMBERSHIP REPLY CARD

- ☐ Please send me more information about AALGA.
- ☐ Please add my name to the AALGA membership list.
- ☐ Please renew my AALGA membership.
- ☐ I have enclosed my $25 yearly membership fee.
- ☐ I would only like to subcribe to *Crossroads*. I have enclosed a $13 yearly subscriptiion fee.

Name_____

Address_____

City & State _____ Phone _____

AALGA Prepares for Black Gay/Lesbian Leadership Conference

Atlanta will be the host city for the third National Black Gay/Lesbian Leadership Conference (the head office is in Los Angeles). The past two conferences were in LA but the committee voted to involve the east coast, therefore, Atlanta it is for 1990. The Hyatt Regency is the location for this event.

The conference will begin officially on Friday, February 16, however,entertainment is being planned for the early arrivals on Thursday, February 15th which will focus on both the men's and women's areas of talents. Other events during the conference are a concert (Friday, February 16th), a banquet (Saturday, February 17th), and a luncheon/ fashion show (Sunday, February 18th). The workshops will begin on Friday and run through Sunday. These workshops cover a vast array of gay/lesbian issues and are designed to be most informative. A more indepth itinerary is forthcoming.

More committee people are needed for the various committees so as to lighten the load on others. There is plenty to be done, so you need to let us know that you can help also. Volunteers are needed to serve in many capacities.

AALGA is the host organization and we need your input to make this first move for the conference a grand success. For more information please write to us at P. O. Box 50374, Atlanta, GA 30302; or call the conference phone (404) 755-7731.

Feminist Women's Chorus

The Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus is soliciting members, who like to sing and have fun. Rehearsals for the winter season will begin on Sunday, November 5, 1989, 4:30pm-7:00pm at the First Existentialist Congregation, 470 Candler Road (Atlanta). New members will be accepted without audition on November 5 and November 12. Non-singers are encourged to join the auxiliary. For more information please call 355-8894.

Gay/Lesbian Film Festival slated

IMAGE will host the Atlanta gay/lesbian film/video co-produced and sponsored by the Southeastern Arts, Media and Education Project, Inc. (SAME). The weekend-long event will include works from Germany, Canada, England and all across the US. The issues range from AIDS and loneliness to political issues. The festival will be held November 10-12, '89.

Friday, November 10

8pm "The Virginia Machine"

10:30pm A Tribute to Curt McDowell
"Confessions" "Nudes" "Video Album 5: Thursday People"

Saturday, November 11

2pm Considering AIDS
"Survial of the Delirious"
"Snow Job: The Media Hysteria of AIDS" "A.I.D.S.C.R.E.A.M."
"Bright Eyes"

8pm Black Portraits
"Looking for Langston"
"Infidel"

10:30pm "Urinal"

Reservation/information 352-4225.

Arts for Pride Festival

An Arts for Pride Festival is scheduled for Sunday, November 19 from 1-6pm at the Inman Park Trolley Barn, 963 Edgewood Avenue.

Over 20 Atlanta artists will be featured in the fine art auction, which includes paintings, photographs and drawnings. Silent bids will be accepted on all works throughout the afternoon. Over 30 local crafts people will be selling their ceramics, jewelry and wearable art. In addition to this, local organizations will be selling books, t-shirts, cards and more.

Entertainment will be provided by Leigh McClelland, Beth York, and SAME's very own comedy/improv group.

SAME is celebrating the diversity and talents of our own community with this event. This festival represents a unique opportunity to share in the gifts of our community, to support our local artists and crafts people, to get holiday shopping done, and to a funfilled afternoon.

Admission to the Trolley Barn is $1. For further information please call 584-2104 . Admission is $1.

A COLLECTIVE STAND: The Way To Political Clout

by pat lewis

This past summer, various gay rights/AIDS organizations from all over the country descended upon

the District of Columbia to protest the high cost of AZT. Their tactics included congressional lobbying, petitioning, picketing, and mass sit in's.

"AIDS activists cite congressional pressure as one of the major factors leading to the price cut in AZT, the only approved treatment for AIDS (Healthweek: Sept. 25, 1989)." The large and vocal movement resulted in a 20% decrease in the total annual cost of the drug (from $8,000 to $6,400).

Yes, I agree. $6,400 is still too much! But it's a start; a giant step forward. Congress, the National Institutes for Health (the federal agency that awards licensing rights to drug companies) and large pharmaceutical companies like Burroughs Wellcome Co. (the maker of AZT) is now aware, more than ever, of the frustration, impatience, and sense of urgency felt by the gay and lesbian community.

The result of this summer's movement is an excellent example of what can be obtained through a collective stand on the issues that effect our community and people. A collective stand makes us more visible and greatly increases the chances that our views and concerns are heard. It allows us to play a larger role in political, social, and economic decisions made at the local, state, and federal levels of government.

Marquis D. Walker Humanatarian Award Dinner

AALGA presented the second annual Marquis D. Walker Humanatrian Award on October 21st at Lanier Plaza Hotel and Conference Center with a packed room in attendance. This year's recipient was Rev. Renee McCoy of Detroit, Michigan. Rev. McCoy could not attend but was thrilled to have been the recipient. In her place, last year's recipient, Carolyn Mobley, accepted. Special recognition was given to Outreach, Inc., Michael Lomax and Loretta's Disco.

The speaker for the dinner was Urvashi Vaid, the executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Urvashi covered many areas of concern for the lesbian and gay community. She spoke about the importance of "grass roots" work of such organizations as MACGLO, BMWMT, NGLTF, and AALGA. She also said "being in the closet is not a reason to cop out!"

Entertainment was provided by Duncan Teague, and the duo Joyce & Jacque. A Choreo Poem written and performed by Carol Tucker. Along with Carol were Joan Garner and Carol Mobley.

"Empowering Ourselves Through Pride" was the theme of the evening. The audience was made to feel relaxed and welcomed by the toastmistress, Madame Edna and toastmaster, Michael Roland. It was a fun filled eveing that you missed if you were not able to attend.

Creating Chance Conference

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's (NGLTF) Creating Change Conference is shaping up to be a unprecedented skills-building event for the lesbian and gay community as NGLTF announced a roster of noted speakers, spotlighted workshops and conference scholarships. The second annual conference will be held on November 10-12, 1989 at the Bethesda Holidy Inn, outside the nation's capital.

In addition, NGLTF announced that its special, one-day pre-conference fundraising seminar has already sold out--indicating the phenomenal interest in the event from around the country. Robert Farmer, treasurer of the Democratic National Committee and development official for the Michael Dukakis for President Campaign, will speak at the pre-conference seminar.

Some 48 workshops have been planned including a workshop by Sabrina Sojourner, AALGA's co-chair.

For registration and other information contact Creating Change, NGLTF, 1517 U Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009, (202) 332-6483.

ACTUP

The women of AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power will meet on Sunday, Nov. 19, 1989 (1:30p) at the Little Five Points Community Center to focus on the women's participation in a demonstration being spearheaded by ACTUP on Monday, January 8, 1990 to express our views on the anti-sodomy law. A sit-in on the steps of the Georgia State Capitol is the plan.

On Tuesday, January 9th a presentation will be made in the Center for Disease Control Atlanta office to ask them to change their definition on AIDS.

A general community meeting will be held at the First Existentialish Congrega-

tion (Candler Road-Atlanta) on Nov. 30th at 7:30p to alert the community on the actions being planned for January 8 & 9. All interested persons and supporters are encouraged to attend this meeting.

ACTUP meets every Tuesday night on the second floor of the Kilpatrick Building (corner of Ponce de Leon and Courtland. For information call 577-8189.

Three Cheers for AALGA

Dear Charles and Sabrina:

I wanted to let you, the board members and volunteers of AALGA know how impressed I was with the 2nd Annual Marquis Walker Humanitarian Award Dinner.

I was particularly struck that evening by the obvious growth in membership that your organization has experienced since your last dinner. Even more apparant, however, is the remarkable level of participation of your members in all aspects of the dinner. In a community that attempts to keep sexism at by by homogenizing (no pun intended) our diversity, your organization demonstrated a wonderful ability to give full expression to our gender and sex role differences. I admire your ability as a group to achieve that goal with such grace and talent.

You must all be very proud of what you have achieved in so few years, the ultimate tribute to the memory of one of your founding members--Marquis Walker.

Please accept my thanks for a wonderful evening and my absolute envy of your accomplishments!

Sincerely,
A Decatur Fan

*** C A L E N D A R ***

Nov. 5, 1989
General AALGA meeting; Anthony's on Gordo St. (Atl.) 4p. Gay Leadership Conference meeting following.

Nov. 9, 1989
"Baby of the Family" by Tina McElroy read ing @ Charis (524-0304).

Nov. 10-12, 1989
Gay/Lesbian Film Festival by IMAGE (352-4225). Please make reservations.

Nov. 12, 1989
Gay Leadership Conference meeting @ Kamau Fred Ware's home 7p (755-9464).

Nov. 16, 1989
"THE WILDERNESS OF INTIMACY: Control and Connection" by Kay Hagan @ Charis (524-0304).

Nov. 19, 1989
Gay Leadership Conference wine&cheese reception @ Hyatt Regency 4p-7p.
Women of ACTUP @ L5P Community Center 1:30.

Nov. 23, 1989
Thanksgiving dinner by All Saints MCC (57 Boulevard, SE) @ 10a -- 622-1154.

Nov. 26, 1989
Gay Leadership Conference meeting @ Kamau's (755-9464) 7:30p.

Nov. 30, 1989
ACTUP general community meeting @ First E Congregation @ 7:30p.

Dec. 3, 1989
General AALGA meeting and pot luck feast; category of alphabets for dishes. Anthony's on Gordon 4p 755-7731.

Dec. 26, 1989
Kwanza celebration.

Jan. 12, 1990
Bingo, First E. Congregation (470 Candler Park Drive) 7:30. $5 for 15 games; extra cards $1. Come join the fun.

CROSSROADS

THE NEWS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

VOLUME 2, NO. 8 November 1988

AALGA Represented at NCBLG Conference

by John S.

Fred W., Ron W., and John S. attended the 10th Anniversary Conference of the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays. The conference was held at the Howard Inn in Washington, D.C. from September 30 to October 2, 1988. The theme was "Homework for Homeboys and Homegirls".

Gilberto "Gil" Gerald, NCBLG's immediate past president and the current secretary, came to Atlanta just over two years ago to form an affiliate chapter here in Atlanta. From this initiative, AALGA was conceived. AALGA was born and continues to live independent of affiliation. However, NCBLG is the governing organization of 6 lesbian and gay organizations which are located in various US cities.

The conference highlights were as follows:
**State of NCBLG address* : Joan Duncan
**Benefit* : Co-sponsored by NCBLG and Black Women Together.
**Keynote Address* : Rev. Carl Bean
**Awards Banquet Reception, "NCBLG; the First Decade* : Audio Visual
**Caucuses* : Bisexuals, Men, Transpersons, and Women

The Workshop Topics:
"All Together Against Aids", "Tell It Like It Is", "The Nitty-Gritty of Political Action", "Nurturing Our Families In Every Direction", "Bringing a Chapter to Life", "Can We Talk?", "Spiritual (Common) Sense".

Attendance is estimated at 100 persons which, according to an attendee, is a significant drop from the St. Louis Conference held over two years ago. Never the less, the

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Letting Our Hearts Lead the Way

by Sabrina Sojourner

I just realized why it has been difficult for me to write about being part of the Names Project Quilt experience in Washington, D.C. As with any experience, I have a plethora of feelings which tumble in opposition to each other.

I am so grateful to have been there: On the Ellipse a massive expanse of green stretching from the front of the White House to the back lawn of the Washington Monument. I felt immersed in compassion, beauty and love. I walked on a beach splashed with color - lemon yellow, royal blue, fire engine red, winter white, forest green, mourning black and every shade of lavender... a name draws me to it. My heart threatens to pound through my chest as tears spill over the dams. My gut clenches as my hand moves to touch the saffron colored patch. The contact dissolves any last doubt (hope) that it "couldn't be" one of my few male friends from childhood I truly cared about. "Nooo!!" escapes from me as I slam my fist against the ground. And in a moment arms I do not know enfold me; and I let the wave of grief wash over me and through me. The voice is soothing. The arms reassuring as they rock me quiet. Magically, Kleenex appears along with hands, arms and faces of comfort. I am on my feet thanking the man who held me. Another man gingerly moves towards me. I see the question on his face. Touching his hands, "I know" all I need to know. "I went to high school and junior high with him," I volunteer. Tears fill his eyes as he moves in to hug me. "We were lovers for 11 wonderful years" he whispers.

The viewing of the Quilt is as full of stories as the Quilt. I know that my experience was

(continued on page 2)

•••LET OUR REJOICING RISE•••

The First Annual Marquis Walker Humanitarian Award Dinner
The African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance will hold an award dinner on
Sunday, October 30 at 5 pm at Paschal's, 830 Martin Luther King Dr.
Dinner, live entertainment, and a lot of fun. Dress is formal or costume (optional).
Tickets are $20 and are available at Charis Bookstore or by calling 378-6979.
A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.

NCBLG Conference

(continued from page 1)

experience proved informative and revitalizing. You are urged to subscribe to the organization's periodical "BLACK/OUT" for an in-depth look at NCBLG. You may even want to purchase an anniversary poster or tee shirt. Inquire with Ron, John (board members) or Fred (Co-chair). They may even give you the latest on the D.C. night life or shall we say "early-morning living" -- Okay!

(*Black/Out* is published bi-annually at 19641 West Seven Mile, Detroit, MI 48219; subscriptions are $10 per year) •••

We would like to express our condolences to the family of Danny Wright who passed on Wednesday, October 19, 1988.

Letting Our Hearts Lead the Way

(continued from page 1)

repeated throughout the two days. It is not possible to walk the 5 miles of walkway and not be impacted upon. There are now 8,288 3' x 6' panels. It is estimated that they represent 22% of all those we have lost to AIDS or ARC. That means that for every panel, 3 other people have died.

There are panels for brothers, parents and their children as well as celebrities. Many different kinds of materiels were used from Barbie Dolls to silk flowers to cremation ashes to lace, suede, plastic, banners, bed sheets... And they are all beautiful as they lay in their stately grace, beaming to us the love which went into the making and maintaining of each one.

Taking it all in as I did from a crane 3 stories above, despite all the love, there is tremendous anger. •••

Poem

-for all AIDS victims and for all the people that have worked in one way or another with the Names Project.

by Angie

Señor,
que se supone seas
más grande que nosotros
dirige hace aqui tu mirada infinita
y verás un ejercito
de hombres y mujeres,
mujeres y hombres
que en desafio
a la injustcia de tu justicia,
que en su intento de sobrellevar su carga de dolor,
en su azaroso y tierno viaje
por las vias de la memoria,
se yerguen más alto que Tú.
Porque del vacio e infertil substrato de la muerte
han creado vida.
Porque desde los portales de lo finito
han sabido crear esperanza.
Porque de su agonía
han podido exprimir risas además de lágrimas.
Porque de las telas de las sabanas mortuorias
han tejido un mosaico de vida y esperanza...
Señor,
levanta tu mirada hacia esta dolorosa
y pintoresca pradera de nombres y de fechas
y llora...

Lord,
you who are supposed to be
greater than us
direct here your infinite stare
and you shall see an army
of men and women
women and men
that in defiance
to the injustice of your justice
in an attempt to carry their burden of pain
in their hazardous and tender journey through
the roads of memory
have risen taller than You.
Because from the empty and barren substratum of death
they have created life.
Because from the gates of the finite
they have learned to create hope.
Because form their agony
they have been able to extract laughter as well as tears.
Because from the cloth of the funereal shrouds
they have woven a mosaic of life and hope...
Lord,
look up towards this painful
and colorful field of names and dates
and weep...

Literature and the Black Aesthetic:
Notes from the National Black Arts Festival

by C. Cummings

For nine days this past summer, Atlantans and visitors from out-of-town were treated to an unprecedented offering of concerts, plays, dance performances, films, art exhibitions, symposiums and other arts activities as part of the National Black Arts Festival. Artists as diverse as filmmaker Spike Lee and dancer Garth Fagan came south to let the country know that the artistic achievements of African Americans are second to none.

On Thursday and Friday, August 4th and 5th, the spotlight focused on Black literature and the Black Aesthetic. In panel discussions and workshops spread over the two days, writers Toni Cade-Bambara, Amiri Baraka, Maya Angelou, Askia
Toure, and others discussed the role of literature in the lives and history of African-Americans. They also probed the Black Aesthetic, seeking to identify what it looks like, what it sounds like, and contrasting it with western (European) tradition.

Literature in Our Lives

Literature is much more than the dusty book that has been in your closet since senior year in high school. Toni Cade-Bambara said literature also includes our stories, memoirs, cookbooks, prison papers, pamphlets, liner notes on album covers, remedies, newsletters, eulogies, family reunion programs and other forms of communication. Maya Angelou spoke at length about journal writing and the autobiographical impulse that has spawned much of our literature, including some of her own work. Jerry Ward, literary professor at Tougaloo College, expanded the definition of literature to encompass the black oral tradition. Jesse Jackson's speech at the Democratic National Convention, he said, was an example of black oral literature. These broad definitions of literature helped underscore the fact that literature is not just found in libraries and bookstores, it is all around us in some form or another.

What is literature's function? To Toni Cade-Bambara, a primary function of literature is to provide a route to consciousness of how life ought to be lived (responsibly, she added; life should be lived responsibly). We always have four choices regarding how to conduct our lives, according to Cade-Bambara. We can accommodate, we can choose opportunism, we can choose flight, or we can make resistance our choice. Literature comes from resistance, she said. Literature comes from our attempts to show that we are already internally valid. We do not need to continually search outside of ourselves to prove our worth. Similarly, Jerry Ward feels that literature, and literary criticism, can deprogram people from the conservative illiteracy in which so many are trapped. He wants whole communities to become critical, not just the critics, so that we can get away from feeling victimized and powerless. Literature and literacy can help resuscitate the old "19th century backbone."

Cade-Bambara also made a point of touching on the historical importance of literature to African-Americans. Storytelling was banned under colonialism and was heavily monitored under slavery. It was treated as subversive because it preserved the traditions of the people being oppressed. The powers that be wanted (and still want) to say that there is only one valid tradition, the European tradition. Yet the literary tradition of African-Americans survived and has become one of global importance to the world. Internationally recognized metaphors of silence and invisibility grew out of this literary tradition. The metaphors themselves, of course, grew out of the legacies of slavery and bondage.

Does literature continue to impact the social and political reality of black Americans? Jerry Ward said yes, there is an impact, but it is impossible to measure. Jesse Jackson's speech to the Democratic convention had an impact, for example, but it is difficult to pin down the specific effects of his speech. Black voter turnout may go up, political participation may increase, but no one really knows. Perhaps more important to Ward is the idea that literature promotes literacy, and literacy will help break the "passive cognition" rampant in this country. Analytical thinking is discouraged in this society; literacy will help reverse this disinclination to think.

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Saccharin Tales

Sweet Sisters and Brothers,

My own experience teaches me that in spite of all the love I have for my biological family there have been significant moments when my own "gay family" has provided what my birth parents and sibling could not. Survival in this not so accepting society as lesbians and gays is very dependent on our ability to foster our own support network of persons who share our sexual orientation and/or those who can accept positively our personhoods without reservations.

There are a few of us who experience unconditional relating with our birth families. It, however, is a sad reality that, for most, that kind of relating is a goal we hope for, work for, or wish would enter the realm of possibility before we finish this chance at life.

My own new "happy" family is fairly extensive, and I have hundreds of associates many people with whom I share friendships of varying degrees. My most intimate circle involves mainly the two men with whom I share a home. I correctly use the word home because they are more than just humans who help with the rent and stay in "that" part of the house. We each have an interdependence with each other, just as families do.

The value of this kind of living arrangement for me is priceless. It is demanding but all family living arrangements are because there is a contribution one gives and is expected to give beyond a share of the expenses.

It is positive because our romantic interests are welcomed here. I is positive because after an attack from the outside world, I am safe here in what one of my roommates refers to as "gay space". It is positive because, when we have experienced losses —financial, romantic, family deaths, and other emotional traumas, we nurture and take care of each other.

We also fight, wrestle, and argue just like family. It's great!

As three men who are not all the same race, from three distinct areas of the country, we strive to form a bond based on something other than a business agreement, which makes our home a political statement. We say something about men in non-traditional roles relating in what may be termed an "alternative lifestyle living arrangement." For all practical purposes, it is working well.

Relating even in a familial way with others is risk taking. I am advocating that gays and lesbians examine how our lives can be or are being enriched when we take that risk.

The risk of accepting and creating our own new families can be further expanded when we attend events sponsored by regional and national gay and lesbian organizations. My visit to Washington D.C. while the Names Project returned afforded me the company of many new brothers in chapters of Black & White Men Together (BWMT) and Men of All Colors Together from across the country.

BWMT-D.C. sponsored an anniversary celebration weekend and, at a brunch held that Sunday, I found myself "carrying on" with two other members at our table for six. None of us had met before, but we each had very similar backgrounds; two of us are performing artists. It took no formalities to acquaint us and put us at ease with each other and "to dish."

This was nothing unusual. I believe it is also true of those among our membership who have attended NCBLG (National Conference of Black Lesbians and Gays) functions, national gay/lesbian sports events, and even our own locally sponsored regional Southeastern Conference for Lesbians and Gays.

When we become part of families that reach beyond our state and even national boundaries we change our perceptions of the lone sissy struggling for survival or the lost dyke in need of direction. My own connecting with the men-of-color in particular with Black & White M.T. has helped me to see that organization as a much more supportive group.

Our strength, especially in the future, will lie in our ability to exist as families that we have forged out of our community to love, accept, and affirm our lives.

—Amethyst Pride

The Hammonds House African American Art Resource Center

by Robin

In 1986 the Fulton County Board of Commisioners purchased the home of the late Dr. Otis T. Hammonds, M.D. This mid-nineteenth century Victorian-style home now serves a resource center for the study of African American Art. Located at 503 Peeples St., SW in Atlanta's West End district, Hammonds House is to into develop a national center for the exhibition, preservation and research of African American art. Hammonds House will offer variety of programs to promote awareness of the contributions of African American artists. In an attempt to fill a national need for research materials Hammonds House will also offer access to books, slides, catalogues, films, videos, microfiche and a computer data base on the histories of artists of African descent. Through computer links the center will connect with research centers in New York, Washington, D.C., and New Orleans.

Dr. Otis T. Hammonds, the previous owner of the house, was an art patron who amassed an impressive collection of African American art dating from as early as the mid-nineteenth century. His collection, purchased along with the house, includes African sculptures and masks, Haitian paintings, and African American art in a variety of forms. Some of the African American artists represented in the collection are: Romare Bearden, Sam GIlliam, Benny Andrews, Richard Hunt, Elizabeth Catlett, Tina Dunkley, David Driskell, Hale Woodruff, Nellie Mae Rowe, Freddie Styles, Lizetta Lafolle, Jenelse Holloway, Lev Mills, Zach Anderson, Louis Delsarte, John Riddle and Gary Porter. The collection also contains works by over a dozen Haitian artists.

Currently Hammonds House contains two main exhibits. The first exhibit is a collection of photographs by P. H. Polk. Born in Alabama in 1898 Polk spent most of his career in Tuskegee, Alabama chronicling the lives of black people in and around Tuskegee Institute since 1927. This particular exhibit features several photographs of famed black thinker Dr. George Wahington Carver. The second exhibit is a collection of collage works by Romare Bearden. Working with biblical as well as mythological and modern themes Bearden created collages with both western and African looks and feelings. Some of the works in the collection were gifts from the artist to Dr. Hammonds.

Although there is no admission charge, it is possible to support the project by becoming a member of Hammonds House. •••

Autobiography: In Her Own Image

by C. Cummings

A provocative exhibition of works by women artists of color is currently on view at Nexus Contemporary Art Center. The exhibition, entitled "Autobiography: In Her Own Image," presents works by 20 women of African, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American heritage. The collected paintings, photographs, drawings and mixed media pieces offer widely varied observations about each artist's life. According to Howardena Pindell, organizer of the exhibit, Autobiography `...presents a view of the artist of color interpreting herself in the context of her choice, which may not be particularly pleasing to the "dominant" culture.'

One major strength of the exhibit is the unique approach taken by some of the artists to express their themes. Adrian Piper's "What Will Become of Me" consists of jars of hair, skin, and clipped nails, evidence of the slow physical and psychological unravelling she experienced while seeking tenure as a philosophy professor at the University of Michigan. Clarissa Sligh's "Reframing the Past" seems to begin as an homage to her childhood family, but through a series of photographs framed by "See Spot Run" text she unveils sexual abuse by her older brother. Sophie Rivera chooses toilet bowls (and their contents) as the surprising focus of her book of photography, "Bowl Study." (A sign over the book requests visitors to put on a pair of white cotton gloves before flipping through the book). And Yong Soon Min's "Agitprop #1" presents her geopolitical view of the world in the form of a free-standing sculpture.

At the heart of the exhibit, in terms of both layout and theme, is "Taking Another Look," by Asiba Tupahache. Tupahache displays excerpts from a book she has written which

(continued on page 6)

Autobiography

(continued from page 5)

deals with the "...ongoing assault on human dignity justified by racism and maintained through a behavioral illness called `bigotry.'" Surrounding the book excerpts are images from ad campaigns, greeting cards, and toys which show the character assassination pervasive in pop culture. The images include the subservient "Indian squaw" on the Land-O-Lakes butter cartons, the all-too-familiar faces on the Aunt Jemimah and Cream of Wheat boxes, and the stern Native American face in full feathers on the Red Man chewing tobacco pouch.

Tupahache's excerpts go on to state that assaults on human dignity stem from a distorted need for power. Child abuse, battering a mate, and cult-like oppression of the vulnerable are common manifestations of this distorted need. However, in order for these assaults to become self-perpetuating over generations, a "perpetrator" is in some way aided by a "victim" and a "facilitator." Tupahache probes the psychology of each of these three components necessary to perpetuate assault. Ultimately, she describes the "survivor" who confronts the criminal assault and accepts that it has occurred. She hopes that we will all become survivors. "The survivors will understand and educate themselves about all aspects of the criminal violation...The survivors of racism must research and understand history to get through the cover-ups."

The exhibition will be at Nexus through November 12. Admission to the gallery is free. Call Nexus for hours. Also showing through November 12 is an exhibit of Women Photographers. Nexus is located at 608 Ralph McGill Boulevard. •••

Fair Housing

Despite the Fair Housing Act of 1968 a recent study funded by the Department of Housing and Urban development found that a black family looking to purchase a home stands a 48% chance of running into discrimination. Black families looking to rent stand a 72% chance of encountering discrimination. The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, creates a new procedure for handling housing disputes. The new, procedure is designed to save time and money for the plaintiff as well as the defendant. If you believe you have been the victim of housing discrimination contact HUD at their toll free hotline: 1-800-424-8590.

Emory Expands Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

by Robin

In May of 1987, some members of the Emory Lesbian and Gay Organization (ELGO) formed a separate group called the Task Force on Equal Opportunity to work toward the inclusion of the words "sexual orientation" in Emory University's Equal Opportunity Statement. After months of work the Task Force amassed a 60 page proposal which included the results of a survey conducted by the group, personal narratives by ELGO members documenting on-campus incidents of homophobia, and a list of faculty and staff who signed a statement in support of the proposal.

The proposal was first presented to the Campus Life Committee of the Board of Trustees in December of 1987. The proposal was then presented to the full Board of Trustees in May of 1988. In July of 1988 the Board voted the proposal down and decided to only state those groups required by federal law in the Equal Opportunity Statement. In August of 1988 James T. Laney, President of the University, drew up a statement of University Policy which states that "For some years, Emory University has had in place a policy on sexual harrassment, defining the types of interference —whether blatant or subtle— with the lives of students, faculty and staff that are unacceptable in our community. It now seems appropriate to extend that same explicit understanding to cover all kinds of discriminatory harrassment, whether it is based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, *sexual orientation*, age, handicap or veteran's status."

Although the Board's approval was not needed for the statement of Policy, the Board voted unanimously to endorse the Policy which covers the entire Emory community. •••

Crossroads is produced by the African American Lesbian Gay Alliance for the people and the organizations that make up and support the black lesbian/gay community. This monthly newsletter reports the events and activities of our community concerns. Unsolicited contributions are welcomed and encouraged.

African Diaspora

by C. Cummings

Over the centuries, over 100 million Africans have been uprooted from Africa and taken to other lands. This forced removal and resettlement of the people of Africa, also known as the African Diaspora, forms the backdrop for a collection of photographs at the Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center. Photographer and writer Armet Francis's exhibit, entitled "The Black Triangle: People of the African Diaspora," shows present-day faces of Africans in Jamaica, the Bahamas, Britain, and Harlem, as well as in Zimbabwe, Kenya and other countries on the African continent. The photos are interspersed with historical information tracing how and why the Diaspora took place.

Armet Francis was born and grew up in what he refers to as the black triangle. Geographically, the triangle is an area whose three points are Africa, the Americas, and Europe. Africans are present at all points of the triangle because of the economics of the slave trade: European ships and guns travelled to Africa in search of slaves, the strong hands and backs that would build the economic foundation of the "New World;" the slave-laden ships then travelled across the Atlantic to the New World, where slaves were traded for money and raw materials; the money and raw materials were then brought back to Europe as healthy profits which funded, among other things, further slave expeditions to Africa. Despite the reprehensible origins of the black triangle, Francis recognizes it as home for all of us. In his particular case, for example, he was born in Jamaica, his ancestors are African, and he currently lives in England. Through his photographs, he tries to transcend the legacy of the slave trade and redefine the legs of the triangle in humanitarian rather than economic terms. Humanity, Insight, and Compassion should become the cornerstones of the triangle, he professes.

Indeed, his 77 photographs succeed in reminding us of our common humanity by providing insight into how people smile in Senegal, how they dance in Brixton, how they work in Jamaica, and how they play in Harlem. His photographs ignite our compassion by showing that a man he might photograph in Nigeria could look just like your uncle in Greenwood, Mississippi. Our African heritage is very real and very much alive.

The historical information, the "Black Chronology" as Francis calls it, traces important African events back to 4000 BC. It is inspiring to be reminded that the history of Africa is, in many ways, older and richer than the history of Europe. It is also sobering, however, to be reminded of how Africa has been and continues to be ravaged. Of the 100 million Africans taken from Africa, only 25 million are estimated to have made it to the western hemisphere. The rest died somewhere in transit.

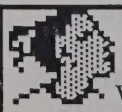
"The Black Triangle: People of the Diaspora" can be seen through November 30 in the Virginia Lacey Jones Exhibition Hall, on the second floor of the Woodruff Library. The library is located on James P. Brawley Dr., near Morehouse College. •••

US Parks Service Learns to Count

by Robin

After over a year the US Park Service finally revised its official estimate of the number of people who attended last year's march on Washington D.C. for gay rights. The official number jumped from 250,000 to 650,000, making the march in October, 1987 the largest civil rights march in the history of this country.

This year the US Park Police estimated the turn out at the candlelight vigil at the Reflecting Pool in Washington, D.C. at 8,600. If the Park Service is consistent in its mathematical ineptitude we can safely say at least 22,360 people showed up at the candlelight vigil. It looked like a lot more people to me. •••



We need a female co-editor to help with *Crossroads*. If you have some ideas on what you would like to see in future issues of *Crossroads* and you have a few hours a month you can devote to making those ideas a reality we could use your help. If interested in helping please contact Sabrina at 378-6979.

Literature and the Black Aesthetic

(continued from page 3)

The Black Aesthetic

The panelists at a Thursday night symposium took a step back from the question of the role and impact of literature and concentrated instead on attempting to define what has been referred to as the Black Aesthetic. Is there some artistic sensibility inherent in people of African heritage which is fundamentally different from the European tradition? The panelists felt that, indeed, a distinct Black Aesthetic does exist and is alive and well today.

Author Eugene Redmond offered perhaps the best description of the Black Aesthetic. It is "the way we do the thangs we do," he said. He then proceeded to list six Principles of the Black Aesthetic:

1. Predominance of percussive performance
2. Call and response
3. Polyrhythms and polymetrics
4. Syncopation
5. Metronome sense (sense of coolness and balance)
6. Songs and dances of social allusion

"Blacks abhor a straight line," Redmond said, quoting another author. Amiri Baraka added to this, saying that in the Black Aesthetic feeling is primary, feeling is content, form is transitional. The frenzy, the bright colors, expressionism are all part of our tradition. As is our "songified language," added Redmond. "Music is hip to us because it's the closest thing to the spirit," Baraka continued. The linear logic of the European tradition is not enough to understand black culture, offered another panelist.

It is important to understand and preserve our own aesthetics because Black art is intimately linked to Black self-determination, according to Baraka. And anything or anyone who betrays our right to self-determination must be opposed, he continued. Art can transform the world; art is what life is.

Read and Listen

Literature is a major conduit of the Black Aesthetic. During the course of the two days, all the writers were unanimous in suggesting how we all could become more literate: read, read, read! They recommended books for young adults (I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, by Maya Angelou, Their Eyes Were Watching God, by Zora Neal Hurston, Souls of Black Folks, W.E.B. DuBois), as well as books for adults (The Death of Rhythm and Blues, by Nelson George, Youngblood, by John Oliver Killens, Goodbye Sweetwater, by Henry Dumas, Be-Bop Re-Bop, by Cartier, writings by Harold Cruz, the writings of W.E.B. DuBois, Beloved, by Toni Morrison, and others.) And they also said to listen, in particular to the music of a group named Public Enemy. Amiri Baraka called their music the most advanced art on the planet.

As we become more conscious of our lives, the external, material security blankets we sometimes cling to may begin to fall away. As Maya Angelou stated, don't count on having anything; live life as a process of discovery. "If a telephone call can let you know that you ain't got something, you never had it." Something we do have, however, is an artistic tradition which has withstood the tests of bondage and oppression, and which will survive as long as we take the time to open our eyes and ears. •••

Do you enjoy getting this newsletter? Membership in AALGA costs only $25 per year and runs from July 1 until June 30 of the following year. Your dues are used to pay for our meeting space, the production of *CROSSROADS* , and to help finance some of our social functions. If you need more information about paying dues contact Sabrina at 378-6979. Take the time out to send in your dues today, the benefits of membership far outweigh the costs.

Those of you who are on our mailing list who do not live in the Atlanta area can also help out by sending a contribution to AALGA.

There is a **SUB**liminal **M**essage **In** **T**his sentence. *Crossroads* P.O. Box 50374, Atlanta, GA 30302. Next deadline November 18 1988.

We Came Together

by John S.

The Women's and Men's Caucuses of AALGA came together for their first joint caucus since their respective inceptions on Saturday, October 15. Twenty gay and lesbian persons met at the home of Sandy and Sabrina. Sabrina Sojourner, AALGA's co-chair, facilitated the meeting.

The caucus was attended by AALGA members and perspective members with a near equal mix of women and men. Caucus participants were open about their feelings and respectful of others' on the topic of "Socializng in a Co-sexual Environment." The purpose for this discussion was three-fold: the need for sexual parity, the perceived lack of female participation at social and fund-raising events, and the need to address sexism in the gay community.

It was brought out that while female participation has been lacking at a number of events, there have been events where male participation was low as well. Persons of both sexes, while offering reasoning for this phenomenon, stated that they had difficulty dealing with flamboyant men. Some felt that this behavior is a mockery of females and often leads to insulting behavior has a problem, these men's behavior patterns are their are their means of self-expression that have no accompanying agenda. Others said that they had no problems interacting with those of the opposite sex and. in some cases, were surprised that these problems existed.

As a solution, may expressed that as persons in the life and in the struggle need to stop and simply consider each other's humaness. It is through these eyes that we find a common bond and, I add, the strength to unite. Individuals who felt the need to speak out against insulting attitudes that might arise at future gatherings were offered firm support by both male and female participants of the group.

The caucus ended with expressions of wanting to come together again several times during the year. A pot luck dinner was enjoyed along with background music, festive card-playing and just old getting to know each other better.

> If I knew you and you knew me,
> And each of us could clearly see
> By that inner light divine
> The meaning of your heart and mine;
> I'm sure that we would differ less
> And clasp our hands in friendliness
> If I knew you, and you knew me.

(This poem, whose author is unknown to the writer, is taken fron Mysticism and the Experience of Love by Howard Thurman.)

(Editor's note: men outnumber women by almost 2:1 on our AALGA mailing list, this could go long a way towards explaining why the male members of our group often seem to outnumber the female members at functions. Perhaps both male and female members should be actively trying to increase our female membership.) •••

Past and Future...

At the October AALGA general meeting we discussed some of the final arrangements for the Marquis Walker Humanitarian Award Dinner and what the future of AALGA should look like. Some of the things mentioned as future projects were outreach programs to both younger and older black lesbians and gays. Several members stated an interest in either establishing a support network of our own or working with existing support networks that do outreach to gay youth.

The November 6 meeting will be a time to recap the Award Dinner, make future plans for the December holidays, and to continue with our discussion of outreach programs.

AALGA MEMBERSHIP REPLY CARD

- ☐ Please send me more information about AALGA.
- ☐ Please add my name to the AALGA membership list.
- ☐ Please renew my AALGA membership.
- ☐ I have enclosed my $25 yearly membership fee.

Name_____

Address_____

City & State_____Phone_____

November Calendar

Sep. 25 - Nov. 6.....**Art and Document: P.H. Polk's Photographs** at Hammonds House, Galleries and Resource Center of African-American Art. 503 Peeples St., SW. Call 752-8215 for info.

Saturday, October 29....**National Ballet of Senegal**, 8 pm at the Civic Center.

Monday, October 31.....**Romanovsky and Philips Concert**, 8 pm,at the Unitarian Church. Call 377-8312 for info.

Sunday, October 30..MARQUIS WALKER HUMANITARIAN AWARD DINNER., 5 pm at Paschals', 830 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. **Dinner and Live Entertainment.** This will be AALGA's Gala event of the season and with it we mark our second anniversary and honor one of our founding members, the late Marquis Walker. Formal Attire or Costume (optional). Tickets are $20 and are available at Charis Bookstore or call 378-6979 for tickets and more information. Everyone Invited.

Friday, November 4.....**Lynn Lavner & Doug Lothes**, 7:30 & 9:30 at the Colective Theater. A SAME Production. Call 875-7263 fot info.

Sunday, November 6.....**AALGA General Meeting**, 4 pm. Open to Everyone. Call 378-6979.

Tuesday, November 8...**Election Day**. Get out and vote.

Friday, November 11....**Women of Color Caucus Meeting**, Potluck/Networking, at Sabrina's and Sandy's home, at 6:30 pm, call 378-6979 for info.

Thursday, November 24.....**Thanksgiving Open House**, 6 pm. Call Ron at 297-8815 or Carolyn at 691-5921.

Friday, November 25....**Women of Color Caucus Meeting**, Potluck/Support, at Diane's home, at 6:30 pm, call 669-0935 for info.

For Informantion on the Men's Caucus call Ron at 297-8815.

Help Wanted: Actors, Actresses and Musicians needed for upcoming project, if interested contact Sabrina at 378-6979.

The basic purposes of AALGA include: to work against racism, sexism, and homophobia in all communities; to create positive attitude between and among black non-gays and gays; to improve the relationships between black lesbians and gay men; to maintain and stress the beauty of black culture and lesbian/gay culture; and to build a strong political and economic base for black lesbians and gay men.

TO BECOME INVOLVED RETURN THE REPLY CARD BELOW TO
AALGA
POST OFFICE BOX 50374
ATLANTA, GA 30302
THE AALGA MEMBERSHIP LIST IS CONFIDENTIAL AND IS NOT SOLD OR SHARED WITH ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION.

Tell us what you think about what AALGA:

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CROSSROADS

THE NEWS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 5 JUNE/JULY 1988

NATIONAL BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL COMING JULY 30 TO AUGUST 7

For nine days this summer a unique and historic event will take place in Atlanta, Georgia - the inaugural National Black Arts Festival. The festival will offer a national showcase for the works of black artists in eight major disciplines: music, dance, theatre, film, visual art, performance art, literature and folk art.

There will literally be something for everyone at the National Black Arts Festival: Concerts from classical to gospel...exciting plays and foot-tapping musicals...rousing and provocative dance performances...films by independent filmmakers...major art exhibitions...late night cabarets featuring avant garde artists...lectures, symposia and workshops...folk arts and crafts...street parties...and much, much more! The festival will feature over 65 different performances or exhibitions in over 35 locations for back-to-back entertainment and a once-in-a-lifetime educational experience.

The downtown dick-off parade will be led by festival Blue Ribbon Panel co- chairs Cicely Tyson and Harry Belafonte and includes a host of other celebreties.

Special programming for children will include a Celebration of African Puppetry, an exhibition and storytelling at the Center for Puppetry Arts; "Teju's Song," an audience participation play by Lolita Woodward and Bill Johns for ages 6 to 12; and the McDonald's Double Dutch Kids.

The Roots Festival, sponsored by The Arts Exchange and Rivers Productions, will celebrate African and Caribbean arts with afternoon activities including junkanoo and limbo dance, African drums, multicultural food, music and a marketplace, culminating with a gala Caribbean Ball.

Savor the origins of early black arts and crafts in the Southern Folklife Festival, in Hurt Park co-sponsored with the Georgia State University Center for Urban Life. There you will see fiddling, quilting, African coil basketry, boat-making, shapenote singing and more by performers and craftsmen like the Rising Star Fife and Drum, Phil Wiggins, John Cephus, the Dirty Dozen, and Janie Hunter and the Moving Star Hall Singers.

Lyrics to Live By, an outdoor festival of music, dance and song will feature renowned vocal ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock and poet Sonja Snachez, hosted by

(continued on page 2)

(Festival, cont'd)

Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee. And, enjoy the sounds of Blues, Bluegrass and Zydeco, featuring Jr. Sample and the Golden River Grass bluegrass band, Atlanta's own blues legend Frank Edwards and Terrence Semien and the Mallet Playboys, red-hot from their recent African tour. Both events are part of Kingfest, presented by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change.

For more information on events of the National Black Arts Festival write to the National Black Arts Festival, 60 Walton Street, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30303, or call the information line, (404) 681-7327.

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HATE CRIMES BILL PASSES IN HOUSE

A nearly six-year campaign by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) to obtain a federal response to anti-gay/lesbian violence led to passage on May 18, 1988 of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act (H.R. 3193) in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill marks the first time either Congressional body has passed a bill favorably addressing a gay and lesbian issue. The bill, which passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 383 to 29, requires the federal collection of statistics on crimes motivated by prejudice based on "race, religion, homosexuality of heterosexuality, and ethnicity." A companion bill, S 2000, awaits further action in the Senate.

"This overwhelming victory is not only exciting but historic," said Anti- Violence Project Director Kevin Berrill. "While Congress continues to permit discrimination against gay and lesbian people in employment, housing and other areas, this vote at least acknowledges that the federal government does have a duty to protect lesbian and gay people from the violence and the threat of violence, which are the most fundamental violations of our human and civil rights."

NGLTF Lobbyist Peri Jude Radecic credited the large margin of the vote in part to the grassroots organizing and support given the bill by the gay and lesbian community nationwide. Berrill cited in particular letters of support written by hundreds of individuals, local constituent lobbying, and widespread coalition support garnered by NGLTF.

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AID ATLANTA FILLS KEY DEPARTMENTAL POSITION

Doris Taggart-Thomas, who joined AID Atlanta's Social Services staff as a case manager in July of last year, has been chosen to fill a newly created position as supervisor of case management. Reporting to Joan Garner, department director, she will supervise and coordinate professional and volunteer case management team activities, plan and distribute casework loads equitably and assist case managers in making work assignments.

"I've enjoyed being a case manager and working directly with clients at AID Atlanta," she said. "But it has always been important to me to find ways to grow as I work. In my new job, I'll still be helping people, and being promoted is a reassuring feeling - kind of a vote of confidence not just in my past work, but in my ability to survive and remain effective in our highly stressful occupation."

(continued on page 3)

(AID Atlanta, cont'd)

"Some of our clients encounter many different kinds of discrimination - not just because they have AIDS - and my previous experience in crisis intervention with many kinds of troubled people helps me to know what I can and cannot make happen here. I find it very satisfying to know how to guide our clients to all kinds of available resources, that we know about, that maybe they would never be able to tap into on their own."

Anyone in need of services from AID Atlanta can contact Doris Taggart-Thomas or Joan Garner at 872-0600. General questions about AIDS can be answered if you call AID Atlanta's AIDS Information Line at 876-9944.

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DEMS URGED TO SUPPORT GAY/LESBIAN RIGHTS

In testimony presented on May 10, 1988 to the first open hearings of the Democratic Party Platform Committee, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) called for an inclusive platform which expressly recognizes gay/lesbian rights. NGLTF Lobbyist Peri Jude Radecic's prepared testimony called for inclusion of planks in four key areas: Civil Rights, Violence, Family Issues, and AIDS.

Radecic testified, "The Party Platform is an important symbol for the nation...The extent to which lesbian and gay people feel welcome... and the inclusiveness of the platform language are important factors for lesbian and gay voters."

NGLTF called upon the Platform Committee to expressly support passage of civil rights legislation protecting lesbians and gay men. Radecic reminded the Committee the the Party platform in 1984 included support for gay/lesbian rights, and cited tksjeng;kijhsdfg;ojhuwlikp9 louhe support of all the Democratic candidates for gay/lesbian rights legislation.

NGLTF urged inclusion of planks addressing bias motivated violence, and particularly, violence against gay men and lesbians. "We are here to urge the platform committee to include language that deplores violence against any American, including lesbian and gay Americans."

NGLTF called upon the party to address the legal recognition of lesbian and gay family relationships. Radecic urged the Committee to "include language which reflects the reality and diversity of family life in the United States."

Citing its six-year role as the gay community's lobby on AIDS policy issues, NGLTF called for planks supporting increased funds for AIDS research and education, and for legislation to augment confidentiality protections and fight discrimination based on HIV antibody status or diagnosis with AIDS.

The testimony also noted the inequities and inadequacies of the nation's health care system, and called on the Democratic Platform to endorse increased public health resources for minority communities, to expand access to health care for low to middle income Americans, and cited the need for an "integrated national health insurance system that would assure availability of quality care regardless of ability to pay."

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HUNDREDS MARCH FOR GAY/LESBIAN PRIDE IN DUBUQUE

Nearly 600 lesbian and gay activists and their supporters marched in the Dubuque, Iowa, Second Annual Gay/Lesbian Pride March in what one organizer called "a dream come true." Marchers poured into Dubuque on April 30 from the Upper Midwest, with busloads coming from Madison, Wisconsin and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Other cities represented were Milwaukee, St. Louis, Chicago, Des Moines, Iowa City, Janesville, Atlanta, New York City, San Francisco, Miami, and Washington, DC.

March organizer Stacey Neldaughter told the cheering crowd, "They said it couln't be done. They said Dubuque can't be changed, but we will change Dubuque. This day is a dream come true for me."

Neldaughter reminded the crowd of the terrifying events at the first pride march, held on September 19, 1987, in which 30 marchers were pelted with obscenities and eggs by about 300 angry counterdemonstrators while local police watched. This year's marchers were heckled by a few observers, but Dubuque police officials adequately staffed the event and discouraged any outbreaks of violence.

Police reported that 16 eggs were confiscated during the day. One man was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct for an egg-throwing incident at last year's march and was also charged with carrying a concealed weapon at this year's event.

Rep. Tom Jochum (D-Dubuque) addressed the rally, condemning acts of violence against lesbians and gay men. "I stand here before you today calling for an end to violence and an end to discrimination because I believe in justice. The Constitution in not negotiable."

NGLTF Privacy Project Director Sue Hyde told the crowd, "We gather in Dubuque today so that none of us, not one lesbian and not one gay man, ever again feel afraid to walk this city's streets...We have come to Dubuque to challenge it to be the best city it can be and to recognize and welcome its lesbian and gay citizens. We will return to Dubuque every year until we no longer need to."

The Dubuque Human Rights Commission has agreed too consider amending the city ordinance to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Commission chairperson Ken Hindman said in the Des Moines Register, "It's a tough problem all over Iowa. There's a real need for good workshops on homophobia."

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U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS BLASTED

At a contentious opening session on May 16 to three days of hearings on civil rights issues raised by the AIDS health crisis, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights was sharply criticized by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), and OUT (Oppression Under Target, a D.C. gay/lesbian action group). The Commission's hearings have drawn fire from gay rights and AIDS activists for being biased, wasteful and irrelevant to the very real discrimination faced by

(continued on page 5)

people with AIDS and HIV- related conditions.

In testimony delivered at the opening panel to the U.S. Commission hearings, NGLTF Director Jeffrey Levi criticized the Commission's opposition to gay and lesbian rights issues and challenged the premise of the hearings themselves. Said Levi, "We have been unsuccessful in getting this commission to address the long-standing history of discrimination against lesbians and gays. Indeed you have worked diligently and often gratuitously to exclude gays and lesbians from your consideration."

Levi continued, "The very premise of what I have been asked to testify on -- the alleged inherent conflict between civil liberties and public health -- is a false one for this commission...Implicit in this claim is a charge that the gay community is placing its political civil rights agenda above that of the public health. Nothing could be further from the truth... We have never stood in the way of measures to stop the spread of this disease for it is our lives that we are saving. What we have argued instead is...that in the context of AIDS... good public health requires a healthy respect for civil liberties."

Levi noted the concurrence between the public health and gay/lesbian community onssues such as the need for anti-discrimination protections for HIV positive people and people with AIDS.

Seventy protestors from ACT UP, OUT, and NGLTF held a loud lunchtime demonstration in front of the federal building where the hearings were held. As the afternoon session began, protestors entered the hearing room and sat silently wearing colorful clown masks while the Commission heard testimony. When outrageous statements were made by witnesses, protestors began to shout out questions and to challenge the Commission. The disruption, which lasted over an hour ended with protestors leaving the hearing en masse chanting "Shame."

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SATISFY THOSE CREATIVE URGES, WRITE SOMETHING FOR CROSSROADS.

SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO:

AALGA
PO BOX 50374
ATLANTA 30302

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**SATURDAY, JUNE 25, GAY PRIDE RALLY - "Celebration of Life:" march from the Civic Center to a Rally and Picnic in Piedmont Park. Speakers and entertainment including Sam Baker. March begins at 12:30pm.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 26, AIDS MEMORIAL SERVICE - 4th annual interfaith service to commemorate family members, loved ones and friends lost to AIDS. 4pm, All Saints Episcopal Church. North Avenue and West Peachtree Sts. An ad hoc choire of volunteers will provide the music. Choral singers wishing to participate are asked to be at the church by 3pm for a brief rehearsal.

**MONDAY, JUNE 27, "STREET THEATRE" - The Company We Keep presents Doric Wilson's comedy set on Christopher ST. in NY. 8pm, Georgia Pacific Auditorium, 133 Peachtree St.

**SUNDAY, JULY 3, AALGA GENERAL MEETING - 4pm. The Quaker House, 1384 Fairview.

**MONDAY, JULY 4, ACT PARTY - Atlanta Couples Together will hold a 4th of July party. 12:30pm until.... 606 Waterview Ct., right next to Stone Mountain. RSVP 498-0733.

**THURSDAYS, JULY 7,14,21,28, EVENINGS AT CHARIS - Thursday evening programs begin at 7:30pm. Charis Books, 419 Moreland Ave. Call 524-0304 for information.

**WOMEN'S CAUCUS MEETING - Call Sabrina, 378-6979 for directions and information.

**MEN'S CAUCUS MEETING - Call 378-9493 for information.

**JULY 20 THROUGH 26 - 2nd International Lesbian/Gay Health Conference and AIDS Forum. Boston. For information, write to National Lesbian/Gay Health Foundation P.O. Box 65472, Washington, DC 20035.

**JULY 29 - AUGUST 1 - International Lesbian/Gays of Color Conference. Toronto. For information, write to ILCGC, PO Box 6597 Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X4.

**JULY 30 - AUGUST 7 - National Black Arts Festival. Atlanta, Ga. For information, call 681-7327.

OOPS!

AAHGA meeting July 10th at 4pm

The Quaker House

July 17th is BBQ/Picnic 3pm

T-Z (Main Dish) A-F (Salad or Fruit)

H-M (Dessert Snacks) N-S (Beverages)

Call Michael 243-5746 for directions

Women of Color Caucus Potluck

July 8th 6:30-?

Call SABRINA 378-6979 for directions

CROSSROADS

THE NEWS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

VOLUME 3, NO. 4 April 1989

Joint letter from the Co-chairs

Dear AALGA Family:

On March 5th a new AALGA Board of Directors accepted the challenge to continue the development and growth of the organization and to fulfill the basic purposes of AALGA.

Our new board consists of nine positions. The members are Charles Nelson and Sabrina Sojourner, Co-Chairs; Ron Wilkins, Treasurer; Fred Ware, Secretary; Joan Garner and Henri McTerry, Co-Fundraising Coordinators; Carolyn Mobley, Service/Educational Projects Coordinator; and Michael Roland, Membership Coordinators. In the interest of parity, we are actively searching for a female member to accept the remaining position as Community Publicity Coordinator.

In past years AALGA's efforts to address all the interests areas of its members were met with some successes. However, as Co-Chairs we are challenged to develop an agenda that aggressively addresses these interest areas; an agenda that is focused in such a way as to maximize all of our collective efforts. To this end we propose this partial agenda:

1. To join the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays as an affiliate chapter.
2. To host the 1990 National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Conference.
3. To to continue outreach to the non-gay Atlanta community.
4. To facilitate dialoque to improve relation–ships between Black lesbians and gays.
5. To increase AALGA's visibility in the African-American gay and lesbian community through membership drives and other social forums.
6. To continue celebrating our culture by observing the seven days of Kwanzaa
7. To produce the Annual Marquis Walker Memorial Humanitarian Award Dinner.

As you can see from just this partial list we have abitious plans, but we cannot do anything without the active paritcipation of our membership. Keep an eye open in future *Crosssroads* on how you can get involved. See you at the meetings.

Report on the 1989 National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Conference

by Ron Wilkins

Sometimes my friends will ask me, "Why do you go to those conferences?" Since this was my fourth conference, I now have the answer down pat; "Honey one of these days I'm going to meet this gorgeous man with untold wealth who will rescue me from this life of misery." We then laugh it off, and I proceed to explain how each conference makes my life much richer, and how I learn through my experiences and the experience of others. Needless to say, my life was greatly enriched by the experience of the National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Conference, that was held in Los Angeles, February 17-20.

We arrived at the hotel th Thursday night and found the lobby filled with familiar faces. I left Atlanta with the worst cold I had had in a couple of years, however I felt instantly energized by the warm embraces and comforting smiles of ex-AALGA member Hal Carter who now resides in Philly, well known writer and activist Craig Harris, who lights up any room with his charming wit, and the multi-talanted, handsome George Bellinger Jr. of GMHC. A check of the administrative room reveled a group of people scurrying to make final preparations for registration on the following day.

The agenda on Friday was devoted to the AIDS INSTITUTE, a day long series of workshops, educational opportunities, and strategy sessions centered around efforts to combat the deadly disease. The AIDS INSTITUTE attracted people from across the country, both gay and straight who are doing AIDS-related work in minority communities.

The day's activities were topped off with a reception at the Minority Aids Project, and later that night an emotional tribute to Sylvester at Catch One, a LA hotspot. Paying homage to the grand diva were such notables as Chaka Kahn, who bumped

AALGA Has Elected Its New Board of Directors
Let Them Know Your Ideas For Our Future

the crowd with a selection of her hottest tunes, and Jeannie Tracy, whose rendition of "Pink Cadillac" made the kids jump towards the rafters. I was especially impress with the thousand or so black gays and lesbians who turned out for the event. Never have I seen so many hot black men and women in one place. I ended this wonderful evening by riding the shuttle back to the hotel with the internationally known Blackberri, who was as charming a conversationalist as he is a singer.

On Saturday the workshops ranged from economic issues such as "How To Buy Your First Home" or "Starting a Small Business" to the more health centered topics of "Black and Beautiful Lesbians" or "Hot Horny and Healthy." Each workshop was excellently facilitated and offered participants a wealth of information.

The social affair that evening was "An Evening At The Cotton Club", a delightful mix of good food, entertainment and dancing.

Sunday's activities included more dynamic workshops and a benefit luncheon sponsored by the National Minority AIDS Council. The speakers at the luncheon included the soul-stirring Maxine Waters, a California Assemblywoman, Whoopi Goldberg's father, who shocked the audience as he shared his experiences as a black gay man in Harlem in the fifties, while accepting an award for his famous daughter, and Natalie Cole who presented a check to the Council and increased the donation by adding $1000 of her own money.

Unfortunately, Monday came too soon, and we had to share good-byes. That morning the black lesbian and gay leaders from across the country met to plan strategies for the next five years. Fortunately, Phil Wilson called me last night to tell me it was official; Atlanta is the site of the 1990 conference. Believe me brothers and sisters, this is one you won't want to miss. I wonder if there will be any gorgeous men with untold wealth in attendance.

AALGA Endorses April 29 March on Washington

At the last AALGA general meeting the membership endorsed a March on Washington being call on Saturday, April 29. The theme of the march is "We Won't Take Four More Years!" Citing cabinet level tokenism as an attempt to deguise the fact the that the "same militaristic, racist, anti-women, anti-lesbian, anti-gay, anti-labor, pro-big business" people are still running the federal government the organizers of the march want to "stop these new attacks before they start." The agenda of the march includes issues such as homelessness and the provision of affordable housing, healthcare and childcare, an end to racism and racist violence, an end to lesbian and gay oppression, full reproductive rights, an end to South African apartheid and many more. For more information contact:

All-Peoples Congress
363 Georgia Ave., SE
Atlanta, GA 30312
(404) 688-7422

NGLTF Endorses April 9 March on Washington

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has endorsed a major national demonstarion organized by the National Organization for Women's (NOW) in support of women's equality and reproductive choice. The demonstration, called the March for Women's Equality and Women's Lives, will be hel in Washington on Saturday April 9th.

The March was precipated by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to accept a case called Webster v. Reproductive Health Services. The case is expected to involve the Supreme Court in a review of its 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade, which upheld the right of women in the first trimester to obtain an abortion. a recent Harris Poll (1/29/89) found that Americans oppose the reversal of Roe v. Wade by a 57-40 percent margin.The Supreme Court could reverse its earlier decision or so interpret it as to cripple the key provisions of Roe. President Bush and other Administration officials have publically announced their support for a reversal of Roe.

Local contacts fot the March may be obtained from the National Organization for Women (202) 347-2279. Women who have had abortions are urged to contact the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), which is preparing a special brief to the Supreme Court on behalf of women who have had abortions. NARAL seeks your stories and expressions of support for Roe and may be reached at (202) 371-0779.

after all what were they going to do "go out and find themselves some lesbian?"
The Dairy of Black Men strikes a strong divisive line between straight and gay segments of the Black community by pandering to the worst homophobic ideas and teachings of our community. During the nameless scene between the jogger and the gay man the 99.9% Black audience was widely supportive of the joggers vicious denouncements of the man's homosexuality.
I hope that this play does not carryout its threat to return to Atlanta. We do not need any more divisions in our community. Upon leaving the theater I was grateful for organizations like AALGA which dare to attempt to bridge the gap between the Black gay and lesbian and the Black straight communities. Organizations which also have the courage to bridge the gap between Black males and Black females in a manner that the writers of The Dairy of Black Men cannot even conceive, with love and respect for individual differences.

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER:

to the Men's Caucus on hosting a fun and educational Hot Horny and Healthy Safer Sex Party

to Henri McTerry and Joan Garner for hosting a wonderful reception at the Hammond's House for Michael Lomax.

to the Women Of Color Caucus for putting on a dynamite show with their "Gifts from the Heart"

DO YOU KNOW THIS SYMBOL MEANS TREATED WITH GAMMA RADIATION?

The FDA does require that irradiated whole foods carry a written label, but this requirement expires on April 18, 1988. The only indication of irradiation then will be a flower symbol called the "radura." Most irradiated foods will be *unlabeled* ingredients. Consumers will not be informed or protected.

Calendar

Mar. 31 to April 2.....**African-American Dancee Ensemble.** Seven Stages, 1105 Euclid. 8pm. 523-7647.
Sunday, April 2.....**AALGA General Meeting,** 4 pm. Open to Everyone. Call 378-6979.
Saturday, April 8.....**Deidre Mc Calla** and **Nancy Vogl** at the Buckhead Roxy, 8 pm. 12.50 in advance (available at Charis, Boy Next Door, Atlnatis Connection) or 15.00 at the door. Call 1-800-444-3821.
Monday, April 10.....AALGA Board Meeting. Call 752-7253 for info.
Thursday, April 6,.....**Joyce andJacque** will perform at Charis at 7:30 pm. Those of us who got to the Women of Color Caucus production "Gifts fo the Heart" know what a treat it is to hear these women sing. Don't miss it. Free.
Thursday, April 13.....Evelyn Kennedy will read from her new book **Of Love and Glory** at Charis at 7:30 pm. Free
Sunday, April 23.....Mens' Caucus Meeting. Call Ron at 297-8815 for info.
Thursday April 27.....Ah, Aphrodite a WOMANSOURCE participatory experience celebrating the approach of May Eve. At Charis at 7:30 pm, call 524-0304 for info.

TO BECOME INVOLVED RETURN THE REPLY CARD BELOW TO
AALGA
POST OFFICE BOX 50374
ATLANTA, GA 30302
THE AALGA MEMBERSHIP LIST IS CONFIDENTIAL AND IS NOT SOLD OR SHARED WITH ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION.

AALGA MEMBERSHIP REPLY CARD

- ☐ Please send me more information about AALGA.
- ☐ Please add my name to the AALGA membership list.
- ☐ Please renew my AALGA membership.
- ☐ I have enclosed my $25 yearly membership fee.

Name_____

Address_____

City & State _____ Phone _____

Unfortunately, a lack of originality is not the worst part of this play. This play also has a one-sided (heterosexual) view of how Black males and females may relate as well as one of the most offensive homophobic scenes I have witnessed on the screen or stage.

In examining the relationship between Black men and Black women the play has an emphasis on coupling as the only true way in which Black men and Black women can relate. Only the aspects of relating within the confines of a heterosexual couple are explored. While the play does say some positive and constructive things about respecting women as people and not objects for sex, it is not even brave enough to suggest that Black men and Black women can love and respect each other without being involved sexually. The fact that the play uses one woman for all the men to react to suggests that all Black women are the same and that the play was only interested in exploring how the different male types responded to this homogeneous population of Black women.

Act II scene III of the play is so misplaced and offensively homophobic that while every other scene has a title in the program all this scene has in place of a title is "?????????". The scene opens with a well dressed man reading a paper and apparently waiting for a bus. As the man waits another man in a sweat suit jogs by him and stops. The jogger calls the waiting man by name and immediately begins recalling their high school days together; in particular the jogger recalls the sexual exploits of the waiting man. The jogger recalls how much he admired the other man because he "screwed" so many women when they were younger. In response to all this praise the waiting man merely mumbles in a manner inaudible to the audience. After his trip down macho memory lane the jogger asks the waiting man how many women he had screwed that day. In his first audible response of the scene the waiting man says, with a heavy lisp accompanied by swishy hip and wrist actions, that he does not do that sort of thing anymore. It was immediately apparent to everyone in the audience that the man was supposed to be gay. The jogger immediately jumped back and began to denounce the gay man with epithets containing the words: "disease", "cancer", "faggot", "punk", "sissy", "sickness", and "contamination from western culture".

In response to this abuse the gay man was either silent or his answers were mumbled so that they were inaudible. The only audible statements the gay man makes are concerning the accusation that he is responsible for the bad relations between Black men and Black women. The gay man responds that his homosexuality has nothing to do with the way straight men and women relate, and that straight women are just tired of the way straight men treat them. These comments are heard loud and clear from the gay man, but all his responses to the attacks on his homosexuality are inaudible.

The silent mumbling of the gay man mimics the deafening silence of the female in this play. Neither he nor she have a real character, they are merely devices for the male types to react to. One major difference between the gay man and the woman is that while each male type is allowed a turn to react to the woman differently under a similar set of circumstances, only one man interacts with the gay man. The message here is that the negative reaction of that one man is universal to all the different male types and is thus proper and correct.

This play's attacks on homosexuality are not limited to gay men. In a drunken bar room scene, the subject of a shortage of available Black men comes up. It was joked that Black women were just stuck,

Tell us what you think about what AALGA:

ACTUP/Atlanta to Target S. C. Legislature

by Jim Harlow

The Atlanta Chapter of ACTUP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) will demonstrate at the South Carolina State Capitol on Thursday, April 20. The action, called in conjunction with a South Carolina based coalition of activists, is in protest of what has been defined as the worst AIDS laws in the U.S.

The law prohibits anonymous HIV antibody testing, establishes quarantine provisions for HIV-positive individuals, conditions release of HIV-positive state prisoners on their HIV status, (even if they have completed their sentences), makes a person's HIV antibody status a matter of public record to be disclosed upon request by state health officials, and allows school officials to bar HIV-positive public school students from classrooms. Relative to this last mentioned provision, school officials cannot be sued or otherwise reprimanded if they made their exclusionary determination in error.

ACTUP/Atlanta has had a series of meetings with activists in Greenville and Columbia, S.C. to plan this action. A picket line and rally are planned, to be accompanied by civil disobedience actions, possibly resulting in arrest. ACTUP/Atlanta stresses that the picket and rally will not expose participants to arrest by S.C. police.

"Legislation such as this, which serves to foster fear and drive the disease underground, must not go unnoticed," said ACTUP/Atlanta spokesperson Chip Rowan. "These types of laws are at the core of the pandemic, and in part, responsible for AIDS rising to such epidemic proportions."

Several key demands will be made by this demonstration on the South Carolina Legislature. They include:

1. Alternative, anonymous testing sites throughout the state.
2. Better pre- and post-test counseling, mandatory after elective HIV-antibody testing. Counseling guidelines will be established by people knowledgeable and sensitive to the realities of the situation.
3. AIDS prevention education YES, Quarantine NO!
4. State funds for education, specifically targeted to the special needs of affected communities, particularly the African American community, which has been hit with a disproportionate number of AIDS cases.
5. Voluntary HIV-antibody testing.
6. Better state-funded care for those unable to afford to pay for it.
7. A state law making discrimination by insurance providers against HIV-antibody positive individuals illegal.

A rally and community speakout is planned for Atlanta on Friday April 7 at the First Existentialist Church at 7:30 pm. Endorsing organizations include the Atlanta Gay Center, AALGA, the All Peoples Congress, ALFA, BWMT, and MACGLO. For more information call the ACTUP/Atlanta chapter at 286-6247.

Project Open Hand/Atlanta

Project Open Hand/Atlanta is a non-profit independent organization fulfilling a need its for clients which is not duplicated by any other agency. There are people in this city who have been stricken with AIDS and are in need of nourishment. Many of them are too weak to prepare a meal, let alone go shopping for the ingredients. Project Open Hand/Atlanta provides meals for clients directly and contracts their services to other agencies involving people with AIDS.

Project Open Hand/Atlanta , inspired by Project Open Hand of San Francisco, was started by Mike Edwards. They are presently operating out of the kitchen of Saint Bartholomew's Episcopal Church. The goal of the project is simple: to feed those who need food. The project attempts to buy food, prepare meals and deliver them with a minimum of overhead.

Presently, Project Open Hand/Atlanta needs more volunteers to help prepare meals and deliver them to clients and to share some conversation with the clients as well. The visits to deliver food are often the only contact their clients get during the day. The project wants their volunteers to feel that they are making a palpable difference in the lives of the clients. And they want their clients to know that they are supported and cared for.

For more information contact:
Project Open Hand/Atlanta
1790 La Vista Rd, NE
Atlanta, GA 30329
or call (404) 248-1788

Saccharin Tales

There are now possibly thousands of African American men in an uproar. They, maybe even you you, were dismayed by the portrayal of Black men in Miss Winfrey's television mini series based on Gloria Naylor's *Women of Brewster Place*. For many black men there is now a documented theatrical account of their behavior and it disturbs them for many reasons.

I contend that some of this yelling is because as most battered victims do, this television series did not lie to cover up the abusers' behavior. I also contend that the men are screaming "unfair" because it was a novel written by a black woman, produced by a black woman and aimed at the black women in Television Rating Land and all these are stepping out of line. I do want it said that I am guilty of some sexist behavior but Women of Brewster Place gave me much cause to celebrate. I have seen the Wizard of Oz* more times than I care to count but I have not seen television programming written many times with any sensitivity about our fellow African descendants in this great country. Rare is it ever that a show is financed by a person of color's production company. There are to my knowledge only the Cosby Show and the Ophrah Winfrey Show. So I felt some responsibility to show support for that which is good and going to in some way help even one of us attain a better position in an industry where Blacks have been commodities since its inception.

I will say in spite of the fact that I know may lesbians will be doing their own hosannahs over the show, that I was also indebted to any black show brave enough to address our external and internal homophobia. I will be very astounded if ever there is a more humane treatment of lesbian sisters. Real to life circumstances flashed over and over while the women acting in those scenes loved and tried to live. I heard arguments from my dining rooms of the past. I felt the aloneness of leaving home that horrible evening not knowing if I would come back ever and feel safe there.

If Women of Brewster Place did cause you pain over its images of black men may I ask you simply do two things. First write your own story!

Second, please count.

Count the number of women in your immediate and extended families who have experienced abuse at the hands of any black man. Please remember that emotional scars take possibly lifetimes to heal as opposed to some physical scars.

Count if you will the numbers of incidents of verbal assualts thrown out by younger and juvenile black men. The Five Points MARTA Station would be an excellent start.

Count also those brothers missing voluntarily from any situation requiring a minimal amount of presence physically such as parenthood, such as financial support, such as hug now and then.

I am also counting. The last scenes involving the lesbians spoke to my recovery. I am climbing out of the terror shock and rape of my self-image and, my right to walk through life as I am. I must by aware that because one resembles my abuser; because one's intonation is similar to that of my attacker; because one has that same scent that makes me remember I must count them not who approached unknowingly like my abusers. I may need to count how many times I fought off the wrong ones.

Amethyst Pride

The Dairy of Black Men, A Sexist, Homophobic Throwback

by Robin

The Dairy of Black Men is billed as a play concerning Black men and their thoughts on and relations with Black women. The play is produced by Maceba Affairs Inc. based in Houston, Texas. The play was first produced in Atlanta in 1986 and they are threatening to return in the future.

The cast consists of six men playing different "types" of Black men and one woman who plays a silent focus for them to act and react to. The male characters range from a semi-pimp named Slick to a wife stealing preacher to a simple working man to an intellectual and a few others. The play consisted of a series of virtual monologues in which the different types of Black men give their not so original views on how to relate to women. Without going into excessive detail, suffice it to say that you have heard it all before, if not on the stage at least in real life bitch sessions.

CROSSROADS

THE NEWS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

VOLUME 3, NO. 5 May 1989

Eavesdropping on the Board

by Robin

I was curious to see how AALGA's new Board of Directors functioned. After all, this was a new Board, half the members of this Board of Directors had not been on the previous Board. I wanted to see how these diverse personalities would fit together and what sort of picture of AALGA's future they would form. To my delight I discovered that the picture is a bright one. There was lots of energy and a determination to get things done on the part of the Board members.

The ideas were plentiful during the two and a half hour Board meeting. Each Coordinator came armed with plans, projects, numbers, projections and even some visual aids. The Membership Committee is getting geared up for a full scale membership drive in June. They want to let old members know that we are part of a family, and they want to gain new members to extend our family. The Fundraising Coordinators already have four fun projects planned, the first of which is taking place on June 3. These two folks have a lot of great ideas to make AALGA a financially solvent organization. The Service and Education Coordinator is hard at work planning programs for our monthly meetings as well as other activities.

The most glaring aspect of all these plans is that they're too much for the eight members of the Board of Directors to do on their own. There is too much work and too much fun for eight people to possibly survive it all. The Board's plans are ambitious and their energy is infectious. If you've been sitting on the side-lines waiting for something to do, or if you've wondered what AALGA is all about, now is the time to take action. **Get involved** - contact a Board member and find out what you can do on their committee. Now is the time to get on board because with these people running the show AALGA is definitely going places.

AALGA to Join NCBLG

AALGA's Board of Directors will submit an application to the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays (NCBLG) to join as an affiliate organization. NCBLG is a 10 year old organization that has 5 chapters across the nation and organizing efforts in as many as nine other cities.

As an affiliate organization AALGA will gain NCBLG's non-profit organization status. This status will benefit AALGA members by making their financial contributions to AALGA, including their membership dues, tax deductible.

Beyond the financial benefits, membership in NCBLG will connect AALGA with other chapters and affiliate organizations and increase our national profile.

To join NCBLG AALGA will have to pay an annual fee of $200. AALGA will join NCBLG for a one year trail and at the end of that year the membership will evaluate the costs versuses the benefits of belonging to NCBLG

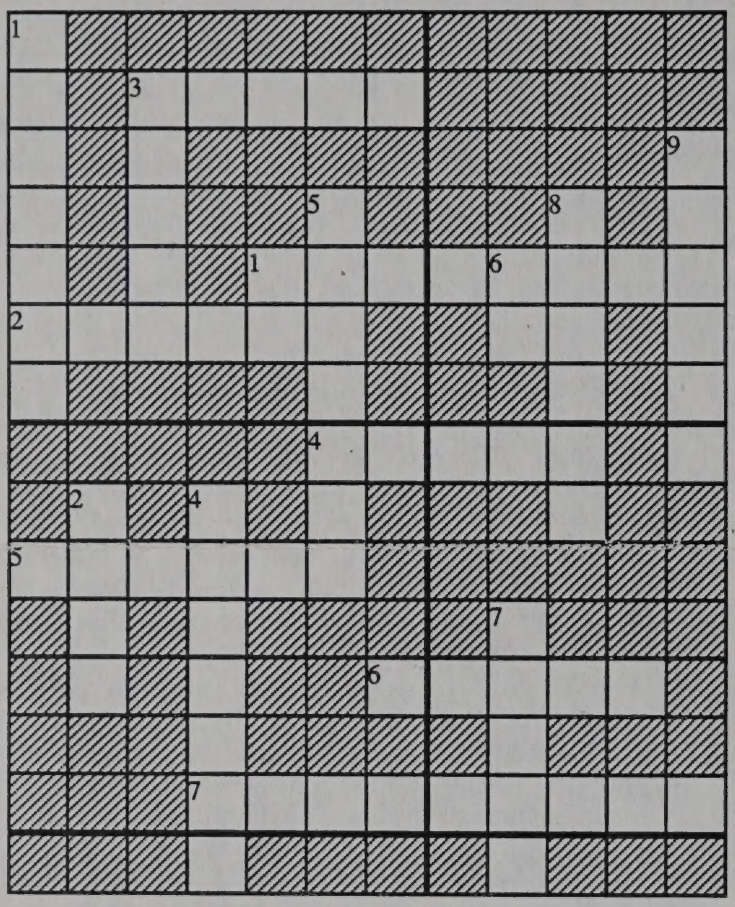
THE 1990 NATIONAL BLACK GAY AND LESBIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN ATLANTA AND AALGA HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS THE HOST ORGANIZATION. SEE THE APRIL ISSUE OF *Crossroads* FOR A DESCRIPTION OF THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE IN LOS ANGELES.

AALGA Needs a New Home

For well over a year now AALGA has been holding its monthly meetings at the Quaker House, unfortunately those days are gone. When we showed up for the April general meeting we were informed that the Quaker House was being sold as of May 1. As a result, our May 7 general meeting will be at a member's home (see directions below). What is needed now are suggestions for a permanent meeting place. The space should be available on Sunday afternoons, be able to hold 30 to 40 people, and be near a MARTA bus line.

The May 7 AALGA General Meeting will be at the home of Duncan, Michael and John at the corner of St. Augustine Pl. and N. Highland Ave. Call if you need directions 874-1185

Crossroads crossword



DOWN

1. The name of the AALGA symbol is ___-____.
2. Activist and editor of a 1986 Black Gay Anthology. Joseph _____.
3. Late 19th century sculptor. Edmonia ___.
4. World acclaimed author of several novels including Giovanni's Room. James ___.
5. 1920's and 30's "Bulldagger" who gained world fame by singing the Blues. Gladys ___.
6. Gertrude __ Rainey.
7. National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays.
8. Pentecostal minister and founder of a black gay church in Washington DC. Dr. James ___.
9. A major poet of the Harlem Renaissance. Langston _____.

ACROSS

1. Play about gay and lesbian People of Color by Sabrina Sojourner. _____ Visible.
2. 1960's Civil Rights leader and an organizer of the '63 March on Washington. Bayard _____.
3. Friend of Langston Hughes and intellectual contributor to the Harlem Renaissance. Alain ____.
4. Well known poet and essayist. Her volumes include "The Black Unicorn" and "From a Land Where Other People Live". Audre ____.
5. Science fiction writer who has won most major science fiction awards and author of the Neveryóna series. Samuel R. _____.
6. Activist and Chair of the NCBLG. Renee ____.
7. 1986 Black Gay Anthology published by Alyson Publications __ ___ ____. (3 words)

AALGA will host

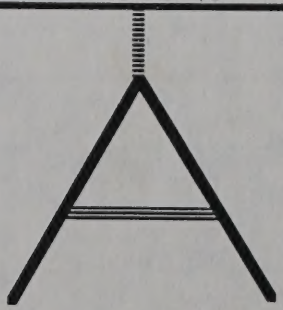
An Artist's Bazaar

Saturday, June 3 Noon -8 pm

Local visual artists and crafts people will be on hand to sell their wares and performing artists will be there to entertain you.

Food, Fun, and a Great Day in the Sun.

2237 Shamrock Drive, Decatur
289-0298
Admission $5



It's Picnic Time!

AALGA will have its annual family picnic in the park on Sunday, May 21 at Lake Claire Park (at the end of Alameta St.) from 2 pm until. Bring your food and your blanket and join us at the park. Everyone welcome.

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Membership renewal is upon us once again. AALGA's membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. Membership in AALGA costs only $25 per year, and when AALGA gets non-profit status (see "AALGA to Join NCBLG" on page 1) the dues will be tax deductible. The benefits of membership include:

- Discounts to special AALGA events (Discounts to be announced as each event occurs)
- Voting rights on issues presented at AALGA general meetings.
- Optional membership in AALGA's Phone Tree
- A one year subscription to *Crossroads*
- An AALGA membership card
- The knowledge that you are helping to support an organization that is committed to standing up for you and to keeping you informed.

If necessary dues may be paid in installments. All payment arrangements should be made with the Treasurer. **The deadline for complete dues payment is the July 2 AALGA general meeting. Anyone who has not paid their dues by this time will be dropped from the AALGA membership list and from the *Crossroads* mailing list.**

The production of *Crossroads* is a major expenditure and although we would like to continue to provide it to everyone who wants it, the financial health of the organization precludes us from doing so. If you wish to receive *Crossroads* but do not wish to be a member of AALGA you may subscribe for a yearly fee of $13.

Maynard Jackson Welcomes Gays and Lesbians at Birthday Party

Maynard Jackson, a candidate for mayor of Atlanta in the October 3 general election, welcomed supporters attending his fifty-first birthday celebration at the Georgia World Congress Center and acknowledged the support of many constituents, including Gays and Lesbians.

Before a crowd of nearly 4,000 supporters attending the fund-raiser, the former mayor recognized a wide diversity of support for his campaign. During his brief remarks, Jackson promised to be a mayor for "...all Atlantans, rich and poor, young and old, white and black, gay, lesbian, and straight..."

Jackson's public acknowledgement of gay and lesbian support has been expressed at previous gatherings, including a recent reception for gay and lesbian voters where he reaffirmed his commitment to equal rights for all citizens. "Gays and lesbians are a vital and integral part of Atlanta," Jackson said, "and merit the same protection ans representation as anyone else."

During his first term in office, Jackson was the first mayor to proclaim a Gay and Lesbian Pride Day in Atlanta.

[Jackson staffers have asked to have an opportunity for him to meet with the AALGA membership. Notification of when this meeting will take place will be in future issues of the *Crossroads* Calendar]

TO BECOME INVOLVED RETURN THE REPLY CARD BELOW TO
AALGA
POST OFFICE BOX 50374
ATLANTA, GA 30302

The AALGA Membership List is confidential and is not sold or shared with any other organization.

AALGA MEMBERSHIP REPLY CARD

- ☐ Please send me more information about AALGA.
- ☐ Please add my name to the AALGA membership list.
- ☐ Please renew my AALGA membership.
- ☐ I have enclosed my $25 yearly membership fee.
- ☐ I would only like to subcribe to *Crossroads*. I have enclosed a $13 yearly subscriptiion fee.

Name_____

Address_____

City & State _____ Phone _____

An Update on the Military Freedom Project

THIS ARTICLE IS AN UPDATE OF AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE FEBRUARY 1989 *Crossroads*.

In November of 1988, four organizations launched a new political organizing project to rescind Department of Defense policies which discriminate against lesbians and gay men in all branches of the armed services. The Gay & Lesbian Military Freedom Project is a joint effort on the part of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), the Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Lesbian/Gay Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

In the area of congressional action the Military Freedom Project lobbyist have visited the offices of six congresspersons to urge Congressional oversight in the investigation of sexual harassment of gay and non-gay women in the military.

The Military Freedom Project has recruited witnesses to testify during the public comment session of the Spring meeting of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DARCOWITS). Testimony will be presented at the DARCOWITS meeting by several women veterans concerning witch-hunts against women service members based on allegations of lesbianism.

The Military Freedom Project has reached out to three women who were incarcerated at Parris Island for alleged lesbianism. Staff and volunteers are currently making contact with active duty personnel under investigation for lesbianism. Gay men and lesbians facing investigations are urged to contact NGLTF and the Project.

Two grassroots efforts underway involve the collection of first-person accounts by lesbians and gay men who are Armed Forces veterans or who are currently serving in the service, and organizing for a national Veteran's Day action to be held in Washington DC in November 1989.

Persons who have experienced discriminations or otherwise been harmed by the Defense Department's discriminatory policies should submit their stories to the Military Freedom Project c/o NGLTF, 1517 U St. NW, Washington DC 20009. Request for confidentiality will be respected.

Calendar

Saturday, April 29.....**Black Book Fair** sponsored by Akbar's Books-n-Things of St. Louis, Mo. 10 am to 10 pm at the Georgia World Congress Center. Room 314. Books from black publishers across the country. Children's Extravaganza 1-4pm. Call 221-3275 for info.

Sunday, April 30.....**Sweet Honey in the Rock**, 8pm Atlanta Symphony Hall. Sign language interpreted and wheel chair accessible.

Thursday, May 4.....**Shay Youngblood** reading from her first book The Big Mama Stories at Charis Books & More. 7:30 pm.

Sunday, May 7.....**AALGA General Meeting, New meeting place. 4 pm.** Open to Everyone. Call 378-6979 or 874-1185.

Tuesday, May 9.....**Alice Walker** will sign her new novel Temple of My Familiar at Charis 6-7pm.

Thursday, May 11.....Cheryl Talkington of featured soloist of the Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus at Charis. 7:30.

Thursday, May 18.....**Aisha Nanji** will talk about her new book Black Celebrations:The First Book of Afro-American Holidays at Charis 7:30 pm.

Sunday, May 21.....**AALGA's Family Picnic.** Lake Claire Park 2pm until. Bring your basket and blanket and come ready to have a good time.

Saturday, June 3.....**AALGA's Artist Bazaar** 2237 Shamrock Drive, Decatur. Call 289-0298 for info and directions. Admission $5.

Tell us what you think about AALGA:

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